

National Catholic Theatre Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

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THE BULLETIN

The 1946 BULLETIN is in the making and will be published on or about September 1. Group members will find enclosed here Father Schroeder's directions for BULLETIN material. In anticipation of much more material this year than last - because of the interest created by the 1945 issue and because the number of groups has been doubled - the space allotted to each group is smaller. But the 1946 BULLETIN, if you take advantage of this opportunity, will be an impressive record of Catholic theatre for the 1945-1946 season. Will your group be represented?

NATIONAL CONVENTION - 1947

You can start now looking forward to June 13, 14 and 15, 1947, when NCTC's National Convention will be held at Detroit - the first real convention with production, demonstration and discussion NCTC has had in six years.

With Detroit the geographical centre of Conference membership, and with our staunch member Catholic Theatre of Detroit ready to supply Convention Chairman Margaret Passmore with on-the-spot assistance for committees, the Executive Board joyfully accepted the invitation of CTD to hold the convention in their city. The Art Institute will supply the theatre for program, and guests will be housed in adjacent hotels.

You will hear more through the year of this major event as plans ripen. Mark down the date now that nothing will interfere with your participation.

QUESTIONNAIRE

IF a 2 to 4 week summer session of theatre production were sponsored by NCTC, how many of your actors would attend? How many of your stage technicians would attend?

Paul Lilly's suggestion to the Executive Board, that NCTC can serve its members best in a production centre, we pass on to you for discussion. The goal is a company composed of the best actors and technicians from many member groups designing, setting, rehearsing, and performing new and old plays of special merit under expert direction.

WOULD YOUR GROUP SEND ITS BEST ACTOR and BEST TECHNICIAN AS A REWARD FOR HIS YEAR'S WORK? DO YOU FAVOR A 2, 3, OR 4 WEEK TERM? HOW MANY MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP MIGHT ATTEND AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE?

The session, as currently conceived, would be devoted entirely to production.

DETROIT INFORMALLY

Executive Board members gathered at Detroit June 8 for a busy session which was adjourned only because Catholic Theatre of Detroit's Sixth Annual, and bountiful, Banquet was waiting. Father Donohue and Father Marlin met in the dining car en route from Chicago; Sister Honora planed in and out of Detroit the same day, while Therese Cuny waited over until Sunday before tackling the air waves again. Mrs. Wyatt went on from Detroit to visit her scattered family in Illinois, California and Massachusetts before returning home. Detroit's Book-Cadillac was starred for future visits, though the grandeur of gold-paved streets seemed lost on the transients. Next June there will be more time, they hope.

Before disbanding, the Board accepted Mrs. Wyatt's invitation to hold its December meeting at her New York home.

The rush of the day lessened no whit Father Donohue's oratorical powers as chief speaker at the evening banquet. But if you know his Exile in the Stars you expect that no amount of cons and pros can dull his keen thinking.

CRITERIA

One of the topics discussed at some length by Board Members was the need of criteria for judging play contests and festivals. The form used at Dubuque in the Mid-West Play Festival was warmly applauded by the five members who saw its value proved there. A copy of the judging sheet will be available at the Service Bureau for your requests. Professor J. Harrison Wright of Kent State U., Ohio, was the judge who made it operate at Dubuque, and for his generous allotment of discussion time in clinic and after hours, the contestants gave him sincere praise.

Father Marlin announced that Marycrest College will donate a scholarship for next year's Mid-West Festival, making six in all.

THE MAGNIFICENT YANKEE, soon to be published by Samuel French, will tour coast to coast in the fall. And Emmet Lavery is also represented these days at Vatican City with both FIRST LEGION and SECOND SPRING scheduled for production. Another edition of the latter is promised soon.

HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA CLINICS

In the pattern of 1-day drama clinics for high school students recommended by National Thespian Society college, university and community theatre leaders have an excellent opportunity to prove their claim of community service while serving themselves. The distance from high school to college and community theatre is taken in giant steps. Here is a chance to build the taste of your audience tomorrow.

NTS has suggested a program which will include demonstration and question-and-answer discussion of casting, rehearsal, stage lighting, and make-up. If you will set aside a Saturday between Sept. 15 and Dec. 15 for a clinic at your theatre, write Ernest Bavely, Secretary, College Hill Station, Cleveland, Ohio, so your name may be included in the list of sponsoring organizations to be published in September.

BISHOP SHEIL DRAMA AWARD

July 1 came and with it a barrage of playscripts - musical comedy, masque, drama, fantasy, and all - including 3 from Ireland, one each from India and the Phillippines. The response of playwrights to the contest is heartening and the Conference hopes to have several good plays as well as one winner to recommend for your production next season. The October Calendar will publish the judges' decision.

ONE-ACT PLAYWRITING CONTEST

The West Central Region announces a 1-act playwriting contest open to anyone in the Region (Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas), with a prize of \$25. Scripts should be postmarked not later than Dec. 1, 1946, and mailed to: Mrs. L. G. Bujarski, Regional Chairman, 732 Porter Avenue, Wichita, Kansas. (Not Service Bureau, please).

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

If you have paid your 1946-47 dues, you should have received your NCTC membership card. Please notify the Service Bureau immediately if it has not arrived.

These cards will be your entree for registration and business meeting at the Convention. Please hold them fast.

NEW ENGLAND REGION

The Conference is welcoming many new members from Connecticut as a result of Sister Marie Ancilla's meeting of Directors in the Hartford Diocese on May 11. Queens's Company of St. Joseph College played host to the meeting. Bishop O'Brien warmly applauded the Regional Chairman's attempt to organize Catholic theatre groups in his diocese, and, encouraged by the enthusiasm, Sister is mapping campaigns for Rhode Island and Massachusetts to prepare for a regional meeting in the fall.

CENTRAL REGION

A list of scholarships and awards at Dubuque's Mid-West Festival gives no inkling of the extra-curricular fun enjoyed by visiting troupes - from the invitation performance of Clarke College's I REMEMBER MAMA to buffet supper, dance and banquet arranged by Father Schroeder. But the prize winners deserve a toast.

Scholarships went to: Joan Murphy of Holy Angels Academy, Minneapolis (Briar Cliff); Jean Knapp of Cameo Players, Immaculate Conception Academy, Davenport (Clarke); Marguerite O'Malley, St. Clara Academy, Sinsinawa (Rosary); John Albright, St. Catherine's Players, Racine (St. Ambrose); Russell Jandreau of Loras Academy (Loras), and William Klein of Aquinas H.S., La Crosse (Loras-1/2). All scholarship winners were gold medalists. Richard Fay of Loras Academy earned a silver medal; St. Catherine's H.S. and St. Clara Academy in addition to their gold medal took home a silver (John Whaley and Concepcion Soda) and a bronze (Ruth Jamieson and Bernadette Brunner, respectively). Therese Cuny's group, St. Mary's Academy, Prairie du Chien, earned two silver (Diana Didier and Judith Balfour) and three bronze (Joan Nack, Joan Cronin, and Therese Hisey). William Colgan of Aquinas, Nancy Dyke of Holy Angels Marjorie Costello of Cameo Players, Merlin Heims of Sacred Heart H.S., Monticello, Charles Bruns and Theodora Burger of Sacred Heart H.S., Waterloo, won bronze medals. Silver medalists were designated alternates on scholarships.

Theresa Cuny, Chairman of the Central Region, told the Board of ambitious plans for fall activity.

PAUL LILLY, on leave from Catholic Theatre of Detroit, is attending Fordham's Summer Seminar and simultaneously serving as Business Manager of THE BULLETIN.

MONTREAL'S FESTIVAL

The 7th Annual Catholic Drama Festival sponsored by The Cathespian Guild, Montreal, May 15 thru 18, was the most successful from the point of participation, attendance, and artistic achievement ever conducted, reports Margaret Tansey, Chairman.

The heavy task of adjudication was dispatched with popular approval by John H. McElderry of Guelph, Ontario, who served as judge of the 1st and 2d Festivals.

Trophy winner was Catholic Teachers' Theatre Guild entry ILE: tied for second place were St. Raphael's Dramatic Society with THE DEAR DEPARTED by Stanley Houghton and St. Gabriel's Guild Players who performed an original, DOWRY FOR MARY by Rev. E. Sheridan, S.J.; in third place was St. Joseph's CYO, winner of Ottawa CYO Contest, producing Christopher Morley's THURSDAY EVENING. First acting awards for men and women went to the Keeneyes in ILE, played by Brendan Fahey and Veronica Smyth.

The Cathespian Guild was especially happy because four of the twelve entries were originals. The Festival has done an important job in stimulating the writing of the new plays. Participation by the Ottawa group likewise encourages the Guild, whose chairman now looks forward to an Inter-Provincial Festival.

AT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Students returning to CU's Drama Dept. June 29 found main floor classrooms, new additions to the staff, graduate and undergraduate facilities clarified, and a registration of 300!

First on the summer production schedule is a repeat of May's musical comedy; July 22 will see Jean Kerr's dramatization of OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY (Dramatic Publishing will print it for fall release); and for August finale, a Lope de Vega.

The opportunity of finding so many Conference members gathered at one spot and of seeing all the improvements plus a production makes a visit to CU too tempting for the secretary to forego. If you are in Washington for the summer, will you write her; she'd relish the opportunity to meet you before or after class.

CATCHING UP

Father Regan, O.Praem., co-worker of Father Guyon at Central Catholic H. S., Green Bay, Wisc., 'phoned en route to Fordham's registration to give us the facts on THE CORD'ROY ROAD. An extra performance was demanded by community leaders, and the whole school was humming the hit tune for a week after the show. Father Guyon, author of the lumberjack comedy, with music by Norbert Ecker, is at CU again this summer.

The St. Genesius Players' Guild, Montreal, entertained at the Catholic Sailors' Club, May 15 and 22, with REHEARSAL TO THE LOVELY MARGARET, AND MRS. BELVEDERE, and also for Montreal's Summer School of Catholic Action.

Dayton Chapter of Blackfriars' Guild is one of the few NCTC groups producing summer and winter. REBECCA is scheduled for this month.

The Holy Family Players of New Bedford (founded 1904) presented EVERY FAMILY HAS ONE, May 14 and 15.

At Academy of Our Lady and Loretto Academy, Chicago, following the ceremony of distributing award pins and oscars for the year, the girls take a pledge before the Blessed Sacrament to further the cause of Catholic Action and to take part in only those productions which are in keeping with their Catholic principles.

Ursuline High School of Santa Rosa, Cal., produced MURDER IN A NUNNERY May 23.

Le Clerc College's director, Sister M. Jeannine, S.S.N.D., writes enthusiastically of their production of MURDER IN A NUNNERY, in which fathers of students assumed male roles, Play Production classes took over staging, and a Music major supplied incidental music.

If you anticipate a production of Margaret Cleary Anderson's JEANNE D'ARC, choric drama, you will enjoy seeing the program from School of the Brown County Ursulines' production, with its careful selection of incidental music.

Loretto Players, El Paso, recommend MYSTERY ISLAND by Lindsay Barbee for 1st and 2d year high school classes.

Father O'Kane discovered that a Richmond plumber could make excellent suits of armor for his Roman soldiers from roofing tin. Helmets, \$2; suits, \$2.50.

St. Leo the Great Dramatic Club of New Orleans entered Fred Eastman's ETERNAL LIFE in the Jr. CYO 1-act play contest.

HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS by Richard Harrity was given an excellent first production by Fordham's Mimes and Mimmers May 27 under Edgar Kloten's direction. On the same bill the interior of a submarine set for SUBMERGED (Row Peterson) was lighted after the audience was shown an effective undersea scrim designed by Maurice de Sapio - who also did the projected scenery for A SAINT IN A HURRY, presented June 8-9-10.

In "Stagecraft Prefaces" the Stagecrafters of College of St. Charles Borromeo, Columbus, have happily reprinted their program prefaces for the past ten years. The booklet is an impressive record. Plays include eight Shakespearean titles, L'AIGLON, DOCTOR FAUSTUS, RICHELIEU, MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, THE SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, HEAVEN COME WEDNESDAY (by Reginald Lawrence, playwriting instructor this summer at Fordham).

Mount Carmel Academy Genesians contributed to the Wichita Diocesan Festival April 27 a short version of Margaret Cleary Anderson's JEANNE D'ARC.

After winning "superior rating" at the Mid-West Festival, LITTLE WOMEN on May 23 was easy for Academy of Our Lady, Chicago.

Cue and Curtain Players, Immaculata College, have already announced one major production for 1947 - CATHERINE OF ARAGON, a new play by Sister Mary Donatus, I.H.M.

In New Jersey it rained May 10, May 11, and May 18, but finally on May 19 the Greek Theatre at the College of St. Elizabeth shone in special glory, and IPHIGENIA IN TAURIS had one performance according to plan.

The Navarro Players at Ursuline College, Louisville, produced THE KING IS DEAD by Victoria Kuhn, April 28 and 30.

An original musical comedy, SONG OF THE IMMIGRANT, was presented by St. John Drama Club of Whiting, early last season. In April this enterprising parish group produced Father Lord's BEHOLD THE MAN.

Albert McCleary stopped in at headquarters June 11 to meet Fathers Donohue and Schroeder, in town for Old Vic performances. RICHARD III at Loras and Biarritz was the starting point, but conversation gather momentum. Watch for Mr. McCleary's article in THE BULLETIN.

